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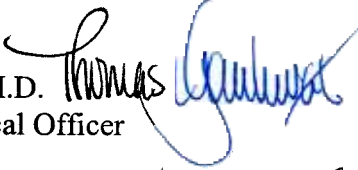
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December 18, 2002

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Thomas L. Garthwaite, M.D.   
Director and Chief Medical Officer

Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.   
Director of Public Health and Health Officer

**SUBJECT: BIOTERRORISM: IMPLEMENTING SMALLPOX VACCINATION**

This is to update you on our current activities to prepare to implement voluntary smallpox vaccinations. As a part of our Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Grant in November we prepared and submitted to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) an interim smallpox plan. On November 22, 2002, the Department of Health Services received supplemental guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding planning and implementation of a national voluntary smallpox vaccination program. The program will be implemented in three phases:

- Phase I: Public health and hospital medical response teams
- Phase II: Traditional first responders (paramedics, fire, law enforcement) and additional health and medical staff
- Phase III: General public

The Department submitted its Phase I plan on December 9, 2002, requesting approximately 9,200 doses for vaccination of public health and hospital medical response teams. The CDC has approved the plan in principle and requested additional information in five of the 31 areas evaluated. We anticipate final written approval of the plan in the very near future.

## **Current Activities**

President Bush announced that he would authorize the release of vaccine to begin vaccination of the military, public health and medical response teams and first responders. We have been told that vaccine would most likely be released on or after January 24, 2003, to coincide with the implementation of the Homeland Security Act. Section 304 of the Act provides some liability coverage for jurisdictions and entities that will be administering smallpox vaccinations. Phase I vaccinations would begin following receipt of vaccine and are anticipated to take at least 30 days to complete. Phase II will follow Phase I and the CDC has indicated that it will provide guidance regarding the development of Phase II plans in the near future.

Although the White House does not recommend that the public receive smallpox vaccinations prior to Phase III, President Bush indicated on December 16 that the vaccine should be made available to those members of the public who insist on receiving it. The CDC has indicated that it will provide guidance to health departments regarding providing vaccine to the public. However, it is important to emphasize that there are no recommendations for the public to receive vaccine and no vaccine is currently authorized or licensed for use by the public, with the exception of a few clinical trials being conducted throughout the nation.

## **Phase I Vaccination in Los Angeles County**

The Phase I plan requires that public health and hospital response teams be identified for vaccination. Once vaccinated, these staff would be designated as smallpox response personnel and would be deployed in the event of a suspected smallpox outbreak.

Designated smallpox public health and medical response team members will have completed medical screening and be prepared for receipt of the vaccine, when vaccination operations begin. Recruitment of hospitals willing to designate smallpox health care teams and orientation of hospital administrators and employee health staff will have been completed prior beginning vaccinations. Vaccinators will be trained and systems will be implemented to monitor and track vaccinations and to record any adverse reactions

A limited number of fixed sites will be established throughout the county and will serve as both vaccination sites and home bases for vaccination sub-teams to offer smallpox vaccinations to public health smallpox response team and hospital healthcare team members on a scheduled basis.

- DHS has requested 9,195 doses of vaccine for the following:
  - Public Health Response Teams, Logistics, and Vaccinators (895) group includes those staff necessary to carry on response operations in the event of a smallpox outbreak as well as public health response teams, logistics and administrative support and vaccinators for Phase II. Specifically:

- Field intelligence and operations teams consisting of: physicians / medical epidemiologists, public health nurses, epidemiologists / epidemiology analysts, public health investigators / disease investigation specialists, public health laboratorians, mental health specialists, environmental health and health Haz-Mat specialists, communications / media relations specialist and criminal investigators. Vaccinators.  
Logistics and field support staff including: translators, medical transportation, IT support, media representatives, and security / protection (individuals including mobile field force units from Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and Los Angeles City Police Department to provide security and force protection of public health response units during a smallpox emergency).
  - The City of Long Beach Department of Health Services and City of Pasadena Public Health Department will assemble teams of similar composition within their respective jurisdictions.  
LAX/Los Angeles Port Quarantine and first response units will assemble a specialty team.
- o Health Care Personnel and Medical Response Teams (8,300): Based on an estimated average of 100 members per hospital health care team, 8,300 vaccine doses will be required to vaccinate the targeted hospital staff. The occupational categories of health care workers to be vaccinated are those recommended in the October 21, 2002 ACIP Smallpox Vaccination recommendations. Each participating hospital will choose the profile and number of staff to be vaccinated for the Smallpox Health Care teams.

We will update you as our plans progress or as more information becomes available. In the meantime if you have any questions or need additional information please let us know.

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c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors